

# **GILA NATIONAL FOREST**



# **NEWS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Gila National Forest Reports First Lightning-Caused Fire This Year**

(Glenwood, NM – February 27, 2006) This year's fire season continues to show signs that the Gila National Forest will be into an early and long fire season in 2006. A winter storm that moved through the area on Friday, February 25, 2006, brought lightning but little moisture to the Mogollon Mountains.

The Spring Fire was reported on Saturday afternoon, February 25, 2006 at approximately 3:00 p.m. by local residents of Mogollon, NM. Five firefighters were dispatched to the lightning-caused fire that is burning south of Spring Mountain near the Redstone Trailhead off New Mexico Highway #159 (Bursum Road). As of Monday morning, the fire was estimated to be about 70 acres burning in Mixed Conifer and Ponderosa Pine. Fire behavior on Saturday afternoon was described as "moderate with flame lengths four to six feet." Twenty one firefighters were assigned to the fire on Sunday, February 26, 2006. Glenwood Fire Management Officer, Alan Beaty said "I expect the fire to be lined by Sunday afternoon and don't anticipate any foreseeable problems. The terrain is steep and rough and firefighter safety is the number one priority."

NM Highway #159 east of Mogollon, is annually closed to the public for winter driving due to safety concerns, by the New Mexico Highway Department. The fire location is approximately 5 miles east of the town of Mogollon and in proximity to that portion of road that was previously closed.

For further information please call the Glenwood Ranger District at 505-539-2481. For general information regarding fire activity on the Gila National Forest, please contact the fire information officer at 505-388-8245 or visit the website: [www.fs.fed.us/r3/gila](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/gila).

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